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EUR/NCE MICHELLE LABONTE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/05/2022
TAGS: [KCFE](#) [NATO](#) [PARM](#) [PREL](#) [HU](#)
SUBJECT: HUNGARY RESPONDS TO DEVELOPING A UNIFIED ALLIANCE
RESPONSE TO RUSSIA'S CFE CONCERNS

REF: SECSTATE 75293

Classified By: POL/ECON-C Eric V. Gaudiosi. Reasons: 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Poloff delivered reftel demarche points to MFA Security and Non-proliferation Department head Gyorgy Molnar, department deputy Vilmos Hamikus and department NATO expert Gabor Marosfi on June 4. According to Molnar, Hungary agrees with our positions noting that Russia withdrawing from the CFE Treaty would be "bad for Europe; bad for NATO; and ultimately bad for Russia." Hungary sees the main players on this issue as the U.S., Germany, France and Russia, who "are the only ones that can influence the final outcome." Molnar emphasized the need to preserve the treaty by "settling this issue before the June 12 meeting." Failing to reach a settlement, according to Molnar, will likely cause "a rift in NATO on this issue that will require a compromise on a new agreement." Should that happen, "Hungary will assess its options at that time." Hungary will not engage directly or publicly on this issue.

¶2. (C) Mr. Molnar confirmed that the MFA has been closely monitoring this issue since the Oslo meeting in April. He said that at the Oslo meeting, German FM Steinmeir called for a compromise with Russia regarding their CFE claims. Hungary did not (and does not) agree with the German position, but believes that Germany, together with France, will push for accepting Russia's stance as laid out in the Russia's reftel note verbale. Mr. Hamikus acknowledged that Hungary is "well aware of Russia's history regarding threats to withdraw from the CFE" and sees their latest actions as likely a posturing tactic. He said that even though they are named directly in the note verbale "Hungary is not a primary player on this issue and will remain below the radar."

COMMENTS: WITH US IN SPIRIT

¶3. (C) Though the GoH is in complete agreement with our positions regarding the CFE Treaty, currently they have no desire to oppose Russia publicly. Mr. Molnar was clear that the GoH will support the U.S. position as "the main players seek a quiet resolution." If however Russia withdraws from the Treaty, necessitating a new agreement, the GoH will review its position at that time.

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